

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Site-Specific Environmental Assessment Rangeland Mormon Cricket Suppression
Program Idaho. EA Number ID-PPQ-MC-2004-001

Background

The US Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has prepared Site Specific Environmental Assessment (EA) Rangeland Mormon Cricket Suppression Program Idaho EA Number ID-PPQ-MC-2004-001 which analyzes alternatives for suppressing Mormon cricket outbreaks on federally managed rangeland in Southern Idaho. The EA incorporated by reference into this document is available from:

USDA APHIS PPQ, 9134 W. Blackeagle Drive, Boise, Idaho 83709

It is also available at: <http://www.agri.state.id.us/plants/GHTOC.htm>

APHIS is mandated to control grasshoppers/Mormon cricket outbreaks on rangeland under Section 417 of the Plant Protection Act of 2000 (7 U.S.C. § 7717). The need for rapid and effective suppression of outbreaks when they occur limits the options available to APHIS. The application of an insecticide within all or part of the outbreak area is the response available to APHIS.

The EA considered alternatives of: (A) No Action, (B) Insecticide RAATs (Reduced Area Agent Treatments) Applications to Large Rangeland Blocks to Suppress Mormon Cricket Populations in Generalized Areas, and (C) Insecticide RAATS Applications to Smaller Rangeland Blocks to Protect Specific Resources. Each alternative was determined to have potential environmental consequences. APHIS selected alternative B, Insecticide RAATs (Reduced Area Agent Treatments) Applications to Large Rangeland Blocks to Suppress Mormon Cricket Populations in Generalized Areas, because it will provide the best balance between the needs to suppress Mormon cricket outbreaks and to protect other elements of the environment.

Selected Alternative: Insecticide RAATs (Reduced Area Agent Treatments) Applications to Large Rangeland Blocks to Suppress Mormon Cricket Populations in Generalized Areas.

Under this alternative, 5% carbaryl bait would be applied to rangeland by aircraft or ground equipment at up to 10 lbs (0.5 lb active ingredient) per acre to suppress populations of Mormon crickets.

All treatment blocks would have areas left untreated to serve as refuges for species which might be directly or indirectly impacted by the treatments. The goal of the program is to suppress Mormon cricket outbreaks, not to eliminate populations.

Standard Operating Procedures

Treatments would only be made on federally managed rangeland. Treatments would only be made in response to written requests from federal land management agencies as provided by the Plant Protection Act of 2000. When treatments are requested, APHIS

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Site-Specific Environmental Assessment Rangeland Mormon Cricket Suppression
Program Idaho. EA Number ID-PPQ-MC-2004-001

would intensively examine the specific proposed treatment sites to determine the need for treatment and if environmental issues exist that were not covered in the EA and this FONSI. In conjunction with this intensive field examination, APHIS would consult with land managers/owners to insure that all elements of the proposed treatments are consistent with the provisions of the EA. All procedures and protective measures specified in the EA and its appendices would be implemented.

Summary of Protective Measures

Insecticide application rates would be reduced below EPA maximum allowable rates.

Treatment blocks would not receive full area coverage. 75% to 95% of each treatment block would not receive direct application when aircraft were used to disperse bait. 95 to 99% of each treatment block would not receive direct application when ground equipment was used to disperse bait.

Aerial applications of carbaryl bait would not be made within 500 feet of water. Ground applications of carbaryl bait would not be made within 50 feet of water.

Biological control release sites would be considered on an individual basis in consultation with the land manager to determine if treatments could occur.

No aerial bait application would be made within ½ mile of crops enrolled in the Idaho Certified Organic Crop Program except on the request of the organic farm manager. APHIS may decline to apply any treatments which were requested inside this buffer area.

APHIS would post or continuously patrol treated areas to insure that nobody entered a treated area within the timeframe required by EPA for re-entry after treatment.

Protective measures specified in Tables 1, 1.1, and 1.2 of the EA would be implemented in all cases. Practices and procedures specified in Appendix 1 of the EA would be implemented in all cases.

Decision

My decision is to approve the proposed action analyzed in the EA and allow application of carbaryl bait under the Insecticide RAATs (Reduced Area Agent Treatments) Applications to Large Rangeland Blocks to Suppress Mormon Cricket Populations in Generalized Areas Alternative for the suppression of Mormon crickets on federally managed rangeland in southern Idaho when outbreaks warrant treatment. Site specific proposals for treatments will be evaluated by APHIS and land managers. All treatments will be consistent with the provisions of the Insecticide RAATs (Reduced Area Agent Treatments) Applications to Large Rangeland Blocks to Suppress Mormon Cricket Populations in Generalized Areas Alternative and with all protective measures specified in the EA. Land managers will identify any additional protection measures which may be necessary at a treatment site. Should the Insecticide RAATs (Reduced Area Agent Treatments) Applications to Large Rangeland Blocks to Suppress Mormon Cricket Populations in Generalized Areas Alternative fail to adequately suppress Mormon

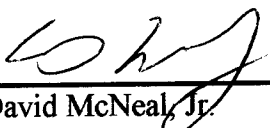
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Site-Specific Environmental Assessment Rangeland Mormon Cricket Suppression
Program Idaho. EA Number ID-PPQ-MC-2004-001

crickets under Idaho conditions, APHIS will conduct a new EA as quickly as possible to determine if any other alternative is feasible.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, I have determined that the impacts will not be significant because sufficient protective measures will be employed to reduce risks of the potential impacts.

Approval



C. David McNeal, Jr.
State Plant Health Director

April 13 2004

Date